

CITY OF ALAMEDA

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: John A. Russo
City Manager

Date: October 18, 2011

Re: Receive the Annual Presentation on the Façade Assistance Program for
Fiscal Year 2010-2011

BACKGROUND

In 1987, the Community Development Department (CDD) established "the storefront assistance program," loaning funds to assist business owners and operators in upgrading their storefronts in keeping with National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Center Design Guidelines. Several years later, the program changed from loans to small grants after staff determined that most similar programs in the Bay Area used grants. The program continues today and is known as the Façade Assistance Program.

DISCUSSION

The Program is managed by the Economic Development Division of the CDD and a Committee consisting of the executive directors of the Park Street and West Alameda Business Associations, a Greater Alameda Business Association representative, a City Planning Division representative and a design professional. The Committee reviews applications for funding and can approve, disapprove or approve with modifications.

Both owners and tenants can ask for design assistance and/or funding, but property must be located either within the Park Street or West Alameda Business Districts or any of the historic train stations. Two levels of funding are available:

- Level One – 80% of proposed project costs, up to \$7,500 for projects involving awnings, paint and signage
- Level Two – 80% of project costs, up to \$15,000 for projects involving both Level One improvements and more extensive rehabilitation including the restoration/replacement of architectural features such as cornices, transom windows, trim, etc.

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During FY10-11, \$250,000 was budgeted for the program, and 14 projects were completed. Employment opportunities were created for architects, designers, contractors, sign and awning vendors and painters through implementation of the projects.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The funds for this project are budgeted annually in the Community Development Department's Commercial Revitalization account (Fund 227). There is no impact on the General Fund.

MUNICIPAL CODE/POLICY DOCUMENT CROSS REFERENCE

Economic Development Strategic Plan (Adopted July 2000; Updated Jan 2008)
The Vision for Park Street (2001)
West Alameda Design Guidelines (2005)

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the annual presentation on the Façade Assistance Program for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

Respectfully submitted,

for L.T.

Lori Taylor
Community Development Director



By: Sue G. Russell
Economic Development Coordinator & Film Liaison

SGR: rr

cc: Jan Mason, Greater Alameda Business Association
Robb Ratto, Park Street Business Association
Judi Friedman, West Alameda Business Association
Simone Wolter, Planning & Building Department
Julie Stonehouse, Stonehouse Design